

Small Group Guide: IGNITING YOUR SPIRITUAL GROWTH - Establishing My Life On God's Word

Opening Question What's one "how-to" skill you've tried to learn (cooking, instrument, sport, hobby) that you realized you can't just watch or read about—you have to actually practice?

Opening Prayer *Heavenly Father, thank you for bringing us together and for giving us your Word. As we talk about the topics from this sermon, help us listen to you, not just with our ears but with open hearts. Teach us how to build our lives on your truth and to actually live out what we learn. We welcome you into this time. In Jesus' name, amen.*

Key Takeaways from the Sermon

Everyone builds on something. We can build our lives on success, money, relationships, or culture—but all of those shift. Only God's Word provides an unshakable foundation when storms come (Matthew 7:24).

God's Word is meant to transform, not just inform. Becoming a Christian is the starting line, not the finish line. God uses his Word to save us, grow us, mature us, and reshape our character.

Five ways to establish your life on God's Word (from James 1:19–25):

Receive it with your ears (be quick to listen).

Read it with your eyes (look intently, not just glance).

Research it with your hands and mouth (study, write, and talk about it).

Review and remember it with your mind (meditate and memorize).

Respond to it with actions (be doers, not hearers only).

Heart posture matters. To receive the Word well, we need to be:

Quiet (slow to speak),

Calm (slow to become angry),

Clean (putting away moral filth and evil),

Humble (willing to welcome and obey what God says).

The mirror illustration. God's Word is like a mirror—it shows us what is real about us. Brief "glances" lead to little change; steady, careful looking plus obedience leads to blessing.

Knowing is not the same as doing. We deceive ourselves when we think accumulating Bible knowledge equals spiritual maturity. Growth happens where we actually *practice* what God says.

Small, faithful steps matter. You don't have to master the Bible this week. Start small, be consistent, and take the next step God is putting in front of you.

Discussion Questions

- 1. Read James 1:19–21.**
 - What stands out to you about the attitudes James mentions—being quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry?
 - How do these attitudes help us receive God’s Word more effectively?
- 2. Read James 1:22-25.** James compares God’s Word to a mirror.
 - In what ways is the Bible like a mirror for our lives?
 - What might it look like to be a “brief looker” versus a “steady looker,” as Pastor Eric described?
- 3. Read Matthew 7:24-27.** In Jesus’ story of the two builders, both hear his words and both face storms.
 - What do you notice about the difference between them?
 - How does this connect to James’ call to be “doers of the word”?
- 4. Receiving the Word – Heart Check:** Pastor Eric talked about “buildup” of sin and junk in our spiritual lives—things that make it hard to hear God clearly.
 - Without getting too personal, what kinds of attitudes, habits, or distractions commonly clog our spiritual ears today?
- 5. From Glancing to Looking Intently:** Many of us have had seasons where our Bible engagement is occasional or rushed.
 - What’s one simple, realistic change that could help you move from “glancing” at Scripture to “looking intently” at it this week?
- 6. Knowing vs. Doing:** Pastor Eric said, “We deceive ourselves when we think that knowing something is the same as doing something.”
 - In general terms (no need for specific confessions), where do you think Christians today are most prone to “know but not do”? What helps move us from knowing to obeying?
 - Why do you think that gap between knowing and doing is so common?
- 7. Meditating on God’s Word:** Many of us have had times where we heard a sermon or read a passage and then forgot it quickly.
 - What practices have helped you remember and return to what God is saying (for example, notes, journaling, talking with others, etc.)?

Practical Applications (Choose one or two.)

1. **Set a daily “10-minute appointment” with God’s Word.**
Choose a time and place (morning, lunch break, or before bed). Start in the Gospel of Mark or John. Even one short passage a day is a great beginning.
2. **Use the four questions Pastor Eric gave:**
After reading a short Bible passage, write brief answers to these questions:
 - What does this passage say (summary)?
 - What is God teaching me?
 - What will I do with what I’ve learned?
 - Who will I share this with?
3. **Memorize a key verse for the week.**
Each week, make it a habit to memorize an impactful Bible verse. Write it on a card, put it on your phone lock screen, or post it where you’ll see it often. Review it a few times a day.
4. **Talk about Scripture with someone.**
Share one insight from your reading this week with a friend, family member, or someone in the group. This turns reading into “research” and helps it stick.
5. **Do one specific act of obedience.**
As you read this week, ask, “Is there something I need to start, stop, or change?” Then choose one clear, concrete step and do it.

Memory Verse for This Week

James 1:22 (NIV)

“Do not merely listen to the Word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.”

Closing Prayer *Lord, thank you for speaking to us through your Word and through Pastor Eric’s message. Help us not to be brief lookers but steady lookers—people who hear your Word, remember it, and do it. Show each of us the next step you want us to take this week, and give us the desire and strength to follow through. Keep growing us to be more like Jesus. In Jesus’ name, amen.*